

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

An EWP Success Story

On May 15, 2003, the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan experienced extensive flooding when spring storms dropped up to five inches of rain on saturated soils.

In rural Marquette County, an earthen dam on the Spring Lake Basin failed resulting in flooding of homes and businesses along the Dead River basin and in the city of Marquette.

Downstream dams were threatened resulting in evacuation of portions of Marquette, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Field Office.

A state of emergency was declared for Marquette County by Governor Granholm on May 16, 2003. Total damage was estimated to exceed \$10,000,000.

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Marquette Michigan's Spring Lake Basin

A second dam failed at Tourist Park in the city of Marquette. A power plant that provides services to rural Marquette County and two mines was closed for more than 30 days due to flooding and siltation of the water intake. Several county roads and bridges were washed



Spillway overflow and new channel formation during the flood.

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Silver Lake Basin emptied after the dam failure.

Several county roads and bridges were washed out.

NRCS staff was involved in the disaster effort from the beginning. Local community leaders were advised of potential recovery assistance through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program.

NRCS field staff assisted local emergency response personnel assess damage to infrastructure, businesses and private homes.

Local units of government requested recovery assistance under the EWP program. Nine sites, out of approximately 60 sites that were assessed, were deemed urgent and compelling in nature.

The restoration work involved installing temporary access roads to the hydroelectric power substations. Critically eroded areas were seeded and sediment was removed to alleviate the threat of additional any damage to the power plant turbines.

Debris was removed to reduce the risk of additional flooding of homes and businesses. Stream bank revetment measures were also installed to protect roads and public utilities.

Approximately \$660,000 of EWP financial assistance was used to address these urgent and compelling needs.

Road washout after the flood.



Debris removal
at Tourist Park
substation.



Flooded residence in the Dead
River Watershed

Silver Lake Basin Repair

